

AN OFFICER AND A GENTLEMAN

By Charles Francis Bourke

Drawings by M. Leone Bracker



Two Goggling White Eyes
Gazed Into His Own.

THE third week of Somers' exile on the island opened under a tropical sun which blazed on the white beach sands with the glare of a ship's furnaces. Other days had been hot; but this was menacing and unnatural.

Macaws and parakeets perched in sulky silence in the woods; out on the coral reef seagulls squatted with outspread wings; even sharks in the lagoon sought the deeper water of the ocean which stretched away like a sea of ground glass into the haze of the South Pacific. To Lieutenant George Somers, mechanically rolling a cigarette in the shade of the solitary beach palm, the weather signs were ominous of trouble to come, and brought a vivid realization of his own precarious position and the promise of the immediate future.

"Marooned in the Sulu Sea, with a monsoon nosing the reef and getting ready to smash things generally, and close navigation! A fine finish for an officer and a gentleman after six years' service in the Philippine navy! If I had my choice of berths over again, I'd take a warship's stokehole. It couldn't be hotter, nor half so tiresome as waiting for a wandering pearl pirate to happen along and take me off the beach. It is hard on a fellow's nerves."

Since that memorable morning, when a silent, sullen faced boat's crew landed him from the cruiser Buffalo on the narrow ribbon of sand, Lieutenant Somers had not seen a human face, and had sighted only one ship, a slate colored British gunboat, prowling among the islands after castaways or contraband schooners hiding from naval law in the tortuous channels of the Sulu Archipelago.

While the gunboat was in range of his binoculars, the marooned man lay behind a sand dune; when she went wallowing on her way south, reeling under her deckload of steel tubes, Somers resumed his patrol of the beach and the channel that paralleled it, with the same stolid devotion to routine work he had set himself to do which had made him noted formerly as the crack duty man of the United States cruiser Buffalo, a disciplinarian who could always be depended upon to carry out orders regardless of consequences to himself or others.

That was in the past, when Lieutenant Somers wore service stars and brass buttons on his uniform coat. Now the whole expanse of Mindoro Sea lay between him and the Philippine mainland, and at that moment the officer's thoughts were entirely apart from monsoons and maroonings.

"I wonder what Maida Williams is doing in little old Manila?" Somers' fancy pictured the slender, pretty girl who had come to mean so much in his life, during the languorous lazy days in Manila. He felt again the soft touch of her hand, and heard the musical cadences of her voice as she answered the momentous question he had put to her that last night ashore.

"If I ever do get away from this confounded place and the little girl is waiting for me, as she promised she would—Heavens! I never thought of that! Oh, poor Maida!" A sudden disturbing recollection made him turn pale under his island tan. "I never

had time to write her before I left the ship for this place. And some fellow is sure to cook up the very worst construction of what has happened to me. Everybody aboard ship knows the story." He winced with pity for the heartache that must have come to her.

"She'll think me a heartless scamp," he growled, gritting his teeth as he looked down at the front of his braid-bound fatigue jacket, shorn of its shining buttons and held together only by a brace of safety pins. A sympathetic hospital steward had slipped him those overgrown cot pins just before he went over the side, with the sailors lined up on deck and the drums of the ship beating a tattoo. Somers pulled himself together, dismissing his disturbing thoughts with a savage shake of his head.

"Well, it's too late now to remedy things. It's what a fellow gets for going sailing in Uncle Sam's sea police. Just the same, I'll make Master Dane Thorsen squirm for this, if ever he drops into this neck of the woods! And that's what he'll do as soon as he gets word of why I'm here, or I miss my guess. I'll make terms with Mr. Thorsen, all right, if I get a chance!"

HE stopped, his jaw squaring, his figure tense, as he stared down the shore. Far to the southward, down the white ribbon of beach, where the imminent reef channel rounded a wooded promontory, something still whiter was forging its way slowly into the stream. Somers jerked his binoculars from the case slung from his shoulder and trained the glasses on the moving object.

"Speaking of pearl pirates, that's a schooner down there, all right, neat little black fore and aft wind jammer. She's working up channel against the tide and the wind. Jove! I'd know that clean cut black hul in the middle of the Sahara desert! It's the Fleetwing, and that means Dane Thorsen! I knew it! I knew he would come through this way!" Somers' tone was exultant.

Lieutenant George Somers had reason indeed to know the schooner Fleetwing, and her master Dane Thorsen, free trader, smuggler, looter of industrious pearl fishers, and, even worse, a man who had set the Philippine revenue service at defiance and led the old cruiser Buffalo many a merry chase through the islands of the archipelago. Somers smiled as he thought of the absent warship and the prey so close at hand.

"I'll bet the pirate's got a hold full of looted pearl shell and a ton of copra piled on top for a blind! He's fixing to sneak through the back waters of the islands and make a break across sea to the Philippine coast. Just the same, I'll take a chance of boarding you, my friend, whether you want me or not. What's he up to now?"

Even in the distance he could make out the giant figure of a man aloft in the crosstrees, overlooking the waters and picking a passage for the little schooner through the coral rocks that strewed the entrance of the channel. When she was fairly in the mouth of the channel the schooner swung up into the wind, the lookout clawed his way down the shrouds, and the head sails were lowered with a rush. Somers drew a breath of relief.

"He's going to anchor where he is till the tide turns—where he can turn tail and run out if a gunboat shows up. Catch Captain Thorsen napping! There goes his whaleboat over the side; he's coming ashore, four Fiji oarsmen and a cute little cox in white ducks. Captain Dane Thorsen does things in style!"

He snapped his binocular case, picked up a light sporting rifle from its resting place at the foot of the

palm tree, and started for the lagoon. From the nearby woods came the chatter of a macaw, hardly a pistol shot away. Somers glanced into the bushes and checked an exclamation of surprise.

"Curious, that! I don't recollect seeing a macaw with the plumage of a scarlet tanager before. By George! that's a Malay headdress, half a dozen of 'em! The Moros wear white. Those fellows must have landed on the other side of the island and crossed over to see what trouble they could pick up. And a little while ago I was praying for action!"

HE broke off, swerving toward the water's edge, making for a little hillock of sand. In the bushes, the gaudy native headdresses, with the sun glinting from as many polished spears, spread out before and behind him. Involuntarily Somers' hand dropped to his jacket pocket and he swore softly.

"Three cartridges! And a single barreled popgun rifle that wouldn't kill a rabbit, let alone those beggars in the bushes! Ah! would you, my friend?"

A spear whizzed over his head, a brown body inadvertently showed itself in the bushes, and the little rifle cracked spitefully. Somers dropped down behind his protecting sand heap as a chorus of derisive yells greeted the shot.

"I might know it wouldn't carry. Oh, for a machine gun from the old Buffalo and a hopper of .44's! You'd sing a different tune, my high and mighty Malay gentlemen! Ah, here they come, creeses and all! Now for the chop suey!"

He jerked out the empty shell and shoved another tiny cartridge into place. The natives were in plain sight now, openly contemptuous of the puny rifle. Suddenly half a dozen men bunched together and sped across the beach with a shout. Somers fired into the thick of them and ducked instinctively before the poised native spears.

At the same moment the whining crack of a rifle came from the lagoon, the storming party took to their heels, and a big red bearded man splashed across the shallow indentation and plumped himself down at Somers' side.

REINFORCEMENTS arrived just in time, I imagine," he panted. "I'd have got that tall chap in the motor centers, if he hadn't jumped and bolted. Ah, they're all levanting!" The heavy rifle spoke twice in quick succession, and the big man chuckled. "Guess they didn't expect such a warm reception, eh, Lieutenant?"

In the surprise of the moment Somers had not spoken or moved except to stare moodily at the red bearded giant who had so unexpectedly fallen into the breach. But when the rescuer casually gave him his rank, he started and shifted his gaze to the keen gray eyes which looked down into his own. Somers had seen Dane Thorsen aforetime, and Thorsen was not a man to be forgotten.

"You know me, Lieutenant, I see," the big man said pleasantly. "We had a little dispute on the coast once, I believe, a cutting out party, or something of the sort."

Somers remembered that cutting out expedition, an attempt to capture the freebooter's schooner which had cost him a run-down boat's crew and a tongue lashing from the commander of the Buffalo. And the man he was after then was this same viking with the flaming beard, who smiled down at him, as he nursed his murderous looking Winchester, with a furtive eye on the woods. And he, Lieutenant George Somers, U. S. N., "an officer and a gentleman," owed his life to this renegade of the ocean! The thought cut him to the quick and roused all his resentment.

The big schooner master watched him, with his cold sailor's eyes screwed up to pin points, as though reading the young officer's inmost thoughts.

"The unexpected always happens, Lieutenant Somers," he said with a smile that showed all his big white teeth. "Besides, birds of a feather flock together, you know. I happened to hear your shot down shore; so I investigated."

Somers flushed angrily under his bronze coating at the classification. "You've heard—what happened to me, then?"

Thorsen gave a contemptuous grunt. "You're posted all over the islands. The Buffalo took precious good care of that! The whole coast knows that Lieutenant George Somers abandoned his men under Moro fire, was court martialed, dismissed his ship, and put ashore on a Sulu island. Remarkable leniency, I call that. Of course you had your own plans for the future not contemplated in navy regulations."

"I'd be an invaluable acquisition to any man who wanted to dodge the United States navy," Somers retorted grimly.

"That's exactly why I looked you up," Thorsen said coolly. "I want a mate who knows every ship and launch in the navy as far as a glass can raise her."

The two men looked understandingly at each other for an instant.

"When do you sail?" Somers sprang to his feet,

with a defiant glance at the big form towering over him.

"Well, I'm not strictly on business now," Thorsen said slowly. "No pearl shell, no copra, nothing contraband. Fact is, I'm crossing to Jolo to catch the Borneo steamer. Sending my daughter back to Manila."

"Your daughter?"

"H'm." Thorsen's gaze was fixed on the channel in the direction where his boat lay out of sight inshore. Somers could almost see the gray eyes soften. "And, Lieutenant," he said, "if you come aboard, I'm Captain John Williams, in the copra trade. Maida mustn't know what blackguards we are—a free trader and a disgraced navy policeman!"

"Maida! Maida Williams your daughter?"

The insult passed unheeded. The monsoon of fate had completed the cycle and struck Somers again, this time fairly between the eyes. Thorsen's big hand fell on his shoulder.

"You met her in Manila, you mean? That won't matter. Maida knows all about you, now."

The second deliberate insult was harder to bear; but Somers had no mind for resentment. In the tumult of unexpected events he struggled to grasp the full tragedy of his position. He was not now in a position to make terms with Thorsen or to make his peace with Thorsen's daughter, whose former confidences concerning her father, a "merchant in the copra trade," were now so fully explained.

SOMERS checked a groan which was capped by a hoarse shout from his companion.

"Name of Heaven! Look yonder!" Thorsen's deep voice trembled. He was glaring down shore with a face gone suddenly gray.

Following the man's startled gaze, Somers saw the whaleboat pulling away from the shore, making for the schooner. In her wake, a cable's length away, followed a Malay proa crowded with red capped men, also making for the anchored craft in midchannel.

The whaleboat reached the schooner and hung for a moment on her bows, while the Fiji sailors on deck tumbled over the rail in a panic. Then, steered by the little coxswain in white, the boat shot up stream. A spear, thrown from the proa after the retreating whaleboat, flashed into the water at the coxswain's side. The proa ranged alongside the deserted schooner, and the Malays swarmed upon her with a yell of triumph which sounded in Somers' ears like a knell of doom; for, with the schooner lost, he knew all was lost.

He had already started down the beach to meet the whaleboat; but Thorsen passed him with the rush and growl of an infuriated grizzly. When the Malay spear flashed in the sunlight, the big man, in a rage, flung up his rifle and poured shot after shot at the enemy.

"The fiends have got my ship," Thorsen shouted, "but the whaleboat's got clear, thank Heaven! The proa can't follow her into shallow water, and if those black scoundrels come ashore again—" He broke off with a cry of anger. "Oh, what fools we've been! Don't you see? That attack back there from the bush was only a blind, a lure to get me from my ship and give the proa time to get round the end of the island and jump the schooner. They knew my Fiji boys wouldn't fight, even if they had arms."

The whaleboat, spinning up the channel with the speed of fear, turned into the lagoon. Thorsen sprang out into the shallows and swept up the lithe little figure from the stern like a feather in his great arm. The next moment Lieutenant George Somers was looking into Maida's startled blue eyes. The girl's glance fell upon the mutilated navy jacket, and she checked a sharp cry.

"It is true then," she said breathlessly, "about—what they told me?"

Somers stood like a doomed man awaiting sentence. Without a word she turned away to her father.

"I brought your pistol along, Dad," she said, a little quaver in her voice. "I made one of the boys fetch it from the cabin, and wouldn't take him off till he did. Did you see them try to spear me? Oh! I only wish they had!"

The low voiced cry went to Somers' heart; but a growl from Thorsen stopped him, as he impulsively took a step toward the girl.

"I wish he'd brought the big Mauser rifle in the cabin!" Thorsen was saying. "I'd make those ship stealers think a Gatling gun was after them!"

SOMERS straightened up and drew in his breath sharply. In his brain a sudden inspiration developed with Thorsen's words—an inspiration that meant the wiping out of his debt to Thorsen and the salvation of them all, if he succeeded.

"We've got to recapture that schooner before the Malays burn her or the monsoon breaks her back on the rocks!" he said to Thorsen.

The girl stood a little apart, gazing at the black clouds rolling in from the ocean, and Somers spoke in his quarterdeck tone.

"There's no chance of those black fellows coming ashore after us; they know the gunboats would catch 'em in the end; but, man, you're trapped here! You have to get away!"

"You're in a hurry to wipe out your debt to me, Lieutenant!" Thorsen said with a flash of his white

teeth. "It's a big order, and there is the girl to think of."

"That's just what I am thinking of," Somers retorted roughly. "You'll find it a big order all around, if the gunboats catch you on this island. You spoke of a Mauser rifle hidden aboard. I have a service pistol back in my shack in the woods. The fog will be over the channel presently. I can drop down to the ship and do the job before they know how many are in it. You can hold off with the whaleboat, ready to run or come, depending on who takes the other, the Malays or me."

Thorsen laced his beard with his big fingers. "It might be done; a surprise is half the battle. You've seen the schooner's build," he said. "She has big stern ports, windows big enough for a man clawing up the rudder chains into the cabin. The bookcase swings out. There's a big caliber Mauser repeater back of it, and a dozen packets of cartridges—"

"The fog will shut down over the channel in a minute," Somers said. "Call in your boat!"

"You can't count on my Fiji boys to help you at a pinch," Thorsen said. "I have to stay with the girl."

revolver. "The commander of the Buffalo would hang Thorsen at the yardarm right before her, if he had his way. As for me—" he shrugged his shoulders.

The whaleboat pushed out into midchannel and dropped down with the tide, the Fiji sailors crouching with ready oars on the thwarts, the girl snuggling in the sternsheets beside Thorsen. Somers, peering into the mist that obscured the anchored schooner, saw a vague outline down stream and slipped out of his jacket.

"That's far enough! I can make her out now," he said to Thorsen. "The tide race will carry me down to her."

He kicked off his shoes and paused irresolutely, his hand on his hip.

"Take your pistol along. I have mine and a rifle besides," Thorsen said. "And you'd better hold out one cartridge for eventualities."

For a second the eyes of the two men met. Somers had fought predatory Malays before. Out of the gathering fog and the smother down the channel a menacing chorus welled over the waters. Somers laid his hand on the gunwale, ready to vault over the side.

"If you do make the cabin," Thorsen said, "the Mauser will sweep the deck."

Somers was already over the side of the whaleboat. For an instant he clung to the boat, getting his bearings. He heard a little sob and a murmur and something caressingly light as a feather passed over the back of his hand. Then he struck out for the schooner.

"God speed!"

OMINOUS splashes came from the lagoon; the yells of the Malays grew louder; but Somers' heart was light in memory of that last whispered wish. A tar bucket, blazing on the forward deck of the schooner, threw a red glare on the waters beyond him. Somers rounded the stern, reached the hanging rudder chain in two strong strokes, and hung on despite the give of the chain and the clutch of the strong tide.

It was no trick for a sailor to reach the cabin windows, flung open to the tropical air. Somers crawled into the open port. Head and shoulders through he paused, his hands on the sill, the sea water dripping from his hair, and the glare of the fire on his face. From where he rested, looking across the empty cabin through the forward window, he saw round the blazing tar bucket on deck a score of natives in savage revel. Then, within touch of his hand, a black bulk rose before him and two goggling white eyes glared into his own.

In a sharp drawn breath of surprise he saw the man's jaw drop and the double row of white pointed teeth flash in the black face. Before he could jerk his hand back to his revolver, the native fled shrieking up the companionway.

"The fat is in the fire now!"

"Bewitched! Bewitched!"

The cry of terror stilled the tumult on deck; but Somers knew the panic of the superstitious savages would not last. He was in the cabin while the shouts still rang out, and had drawn Thorsen's heavy Mauser from its secret cache behind the bookcase. Through the front windows he had a vision of black goggling figures coming toward him, a forest of curved knives, laced with flame from the blazing tar bucket. Somers dropped in a clip of cartridges, then dropped the rifle on the window sill and emptied the Mauser over the deck, firing without even aiming.

"I'll teach you to ball up my plans and try to murder an American girl!" he snarled. He cuddled the stock to pick off the raiding party with the precision of a marksman. At the same moment cries of alarm supplemented the howls of terror on deck. He saw the Malays leaping into the proa and chopping frantically at the mooring lines. The schooner's deck was clear and the proa swept past on the tide rush.

"Cut loose the anchor! There's no time to haul it up! Hoist the sails!"

It was Thorsen's blaring voice, and Thorsen's big form sprang over the side. Somers, amazed at the turn of events, saw him snatch up a discarded hatchet and rush forward into the bows. Copper colored bodies of the Fiji sailors supplanted the Malays on deck, the head sails went up with a rush, and the schooner, rearing from her parted moorings like a restive horse, turned in her own length and fled out of the channel on the heels of the Malay proa. Then Fate struck once more, and Somers understood the panic of the natives and the sudden advent of Thorsen.

JUST outside the reef, a high sided white steamer, the sparks shooting from her yellow stacks, under forced draft, marked time with the flying schooner. On her bridge a battery of glasses was trained on

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M-LEONE
BRACKER

Catching Thorsen Across the Back and Tossing Him Far Into the Breakers.

"Call in your boat!" Somers spun on his heel.

"And the lagoon is full of sharks for a swimmer—"

Somers was already in the bush. Thorsen looked after him, grimly smiling.

"A coward who quit under fire!" he said and laughed. "I only wish I had a dozen like him on my ship."

WHATEVER may have happened in the immediate or distant past, it was not in Lieutenant Somers' mind just then to measure chances in the face of imminent action. He only remembered that Maida, his Manila Maida, stood in danger of death and, should a prowling gunboat show up inopportunistly, of worse than death.

"I simply must get them off the island," he told himself, as he hurried back, strapping on his precious

Twisting Titles Into Smiles

Continued from page 9

original. King Edward is reported to have pointed out to George Edwards, shortly before the London production, that "The Merry Widow" was a happier translation of "Die Lustige Witwe" than the title then announced, "The Jolly Widow." The Viennese "Heisses Blut" has succeeded in two versions in this country, "A Dangerous Maid" and "The Rollicking Girl," both of which may be said to have, in a way, retained some of the spirit of the original title without being at all "Hot Blood."

We get a glimpse of the reverse side of this difficulty in translation on the German stage, where the Oscar Wilde plays are very popular. Perhaps the best liked is the fantastic farce with the punning title of "The Importance of Being Earnest," which is known on the German stage as "Bunbury." Bunbury, you may recall, is the name the hero—"Ernest in town and Jack in the country"—has given to his imaginary friend to whose bedside he is invariably called when he wishes to sidestep an unpleasant duty.

Bunbury is not the only imaginary man whose name is used as the title of a play. There is "Sir Anthony," the baronet the little cockney snob invented to boast of as a friend, in the Haddon Chambers farce; just as Miss Annie Russell used to keep off overardent suitors by pretending to be the wife of "The Mysterious Mr. Bugle." And of course you recall that the point of the famous Hoyt farce was that the gay San Franciscans really were going to a masked ball at the Cliff House when they announced themselves as bound on "A Trip to Chinatown."

When the delightful satirical comedy of "A Royal Family" was announced for production Queen Victoria indirectly requested the author to change the title. She did not demand it, and Captain Marshall did not comply. But see how much more influential a department store is than a Queen! A musical farce was put into rehearsal under the name of "The Girl from Jay's." Now, Jay's is a large shop in London. One might suppose the proprietors pleased with the advertisement. Nevertheless, they themselves requested the title changed. The manager refused. Then the Jay firm threatened a libel suit, pointing out that the farce represented a girl in their employ as no better than she ought to be. Thus it was that London—and our country—came to know and enjoy the play as "The Girl from Kay's."

Not a few amusing distortions of familiar titles are unknown to the general public because the burlesques they designated were acted privately. The Lambs Club usually prefers to contribute to the gaiety of its members rather than of nations. "Paid When Full," for example, speaks for itself. So does "What Every Woman Thinks She Knows." Anyone who saw "The First Gentleman of Europe," Mrs. Frances Hodgson Burnett's drama about the wicked intrigues of the wickedest Prince of Wales, can smile at a title so good, though easy, as "The Worst Gentleman of Europe."

In that burlesque the late Edward Morgan

played the same part he acted in the original drama at the Lyceum. And though all the other characters were caricatured, the heroic lines of his rôle were retained and he delivered them with intense sincerity. Charles Hawtrey did the same thing in London, as a friendly prank in a performance given by DeWolf Hopper and his American company. Mr. Hawtrey was Mrs. Langtry's leading actor in "The Degenerates"; so when Hopper caricatured her as the heroine Hawtrey added to the absurdity by soberly playing himself in the opposite rôle.

Many Lambs Club burlesques have found their way to the professional stage as interpolations in full length extravaganzas. Glen McDonough's "The Notorious Adventures of the Second Mrs. Brownsmit" was as laborious a title from the two Pinero plays as Clay M. Greene's "Sharp Becky" or "The Secret of Gillette's Service." But Mr. McDonough made a point in making fun of "Sporting Life" as "The Sporty Wife," because the scene he emphasized was the murder of the scheming, unfaithful wife.

It would be a futile bid for a smile to recall such jests, laborious yet puny, as "Thrilly" and "Cryris" and "Children of the Get-Dough." But people familiar with the original dramas don't need second sight to see the point of "The Great Decide" and of "The Darling of the Gallery Gods." And coming at the moment when Dr. Osler was the topic of general jest, "When We Are Forty-one" was a happy title for a burlesque on a roof garden. You disagree? Well, it was a very hot, humid New York summer and any breezy wheeze was welcome.

A decade or more ago three authors collaborated to turn out the libretto for one of those "Casino summer shows" which were for several years so popular. But too many cooks spoiled the froth. One of the authors was invited to withdraw. He retorted that if he did he would take what he had written with him. "You're welcome," was the answer. All he could find to remove was the title.

That was how it came about that the extravaganza announced as "The Mimic World" was presented as "The Merry World." The original title was used for a similar entertainment at the Casino some years later.

After a prolonged London success "Lady Macbeth" became "My Lady's Maid" on the voyage over to our side, while "Little Christopher Columbus" lost its last name somewhere in the same sea. "The Grand Duchess of Gerolstein" and "The Drum Major's Daughter" were similarly clipped before achieving their successes on our side. Miss Paula Edwardes gave a good reason when she imported "Winsome Winnie Walker" for her use and bade the "Walker" walk away. "If there is any extra space on the billboards," she remarked, "I want it for my name, not Winnie Walker's."

I wonder what Miss Edwardes thought when E. H. Sothern ordered the drama written for him by Lawrence Irving announced as "The Fool Hath Said in His Heart There is No God."

An Officer and a Gentleman

Continued from page 5

Somers, standing beside the wheel; then came the sharp bark of a signal gun and the wail of the cruiser's siren, mingled with the roar of the coming storm.

"It's the Buffalo! And the monsoon is on us! Will you steer the schooner out? Quick, man!" Thorsen's fierce face glared into his own. "They'll not take me alive!"

Somers hesitated. The habit of navy discipline was still upon him. To him Thorsen was the outlaw, for whom the Buffalo had raked the seas. And here, with the cruiser upon them, was Somers' opportunity.

A channel of saffron light shot through the mist from the cruiser's bridge, flooding the group. Somers looked down at a white little figure clinging to the hatch. The sight of that forlorn little form battered down his last tenacity of purpose; with it went every thought of discipline, of the ultimate call of service and country.

He heard the clanging of the engine bell, the searchlight blinked, and the cruiser sheered off, heading into the blow. With a reckless, smothered cry, Somers sprang at the wheel, flashing defiance at the white ship.

"For the girl! Duty be hanged!"

The schooner passed the proa with the rush of a seagull before the wind. Thorsen, staring ahead, in the foreshrouds blared forth orders to the Fiji crew. At the wheel Somers' glance wandered moodily over the tumbling ocean. The cruiser, disgrace everlasting, and a painted wall of coming blackness were behind him, and death threatened ahead! It was almost as if the cruiser, which had known him at his best, had come expressly to witness his final degradation. The channel mouth and the ocean opened; then with the howling of ambushed wolves the storm swooped down on them. The schooner's mainsail split and vanished like paper; under the pull of her foreails the little ship staggered, turned her head inshore, and fled down the rock strewn coast like a runaway horse.

"We're done for, Lieutenant! She's taken the bit in her teeth, and she's making for the outlying reefs! It was only a chance, after all," Dane Thorsen stood calmly beside him, his big hand resting on the helpless wheel. "We can't work her with the mainsail gone, and the cruiser's after us," he added significantly. "Well, Lieutenant?"

YOU know what you have to expect when the Buffalo takes us off?" Somers' tone was contemptuously incisive. "If you don't happen to know it, I can tell you I was waiting for you on that island. The disgrace and all that was simply a trick to catch you.

"Anyway, I know it now, to catch me or

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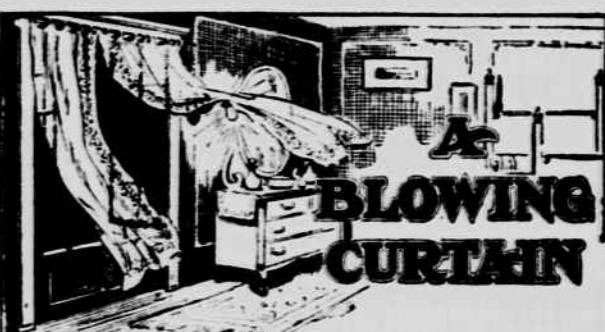
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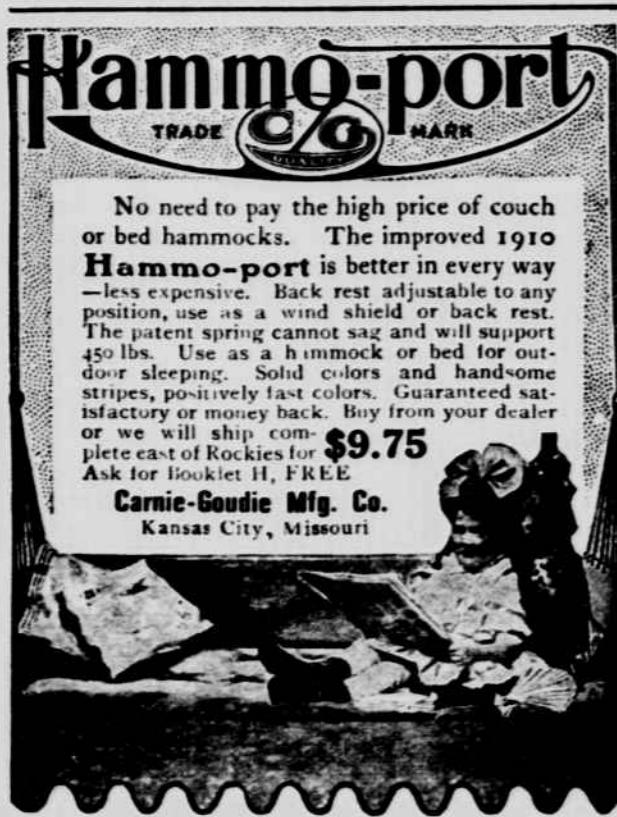
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